

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 24, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
115 East State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers:

Hundreds of Wisconsinites are gathering around the Capitol today expressing concern regarding your extended Safer at Home order. These concerns are well-founded, especially since our shutdown far exceeds that of neighboring states. Without strong, bipartisan leadership, we can only expect this frustration to increase and for our state to become further divided. To avoid that division, I urge you to change course and take a bottom-up, bipartisan approach built on placing trust in our local communities and in the uncommon amount of common-sense of Wisconsinites.

Across our state, different villages and counties, businesses and non-profits, and chambers of commerce and school boards are coming up with creative ways to protect their people while getting back to work and back to school. We need to empower them. We need to recognize that there is no one-size-fits all, top-down, perfect plan, and that what works in Madison or Milwaukee is going to be different than what works in Manawa or Marinette. With that in mind, I urge you to form a bipartisan task force with our state legislators to review these bottom-up ideas and provide support and pushback where needed. No one holds all the answers, and I guarantee that if you were willing to listen to the protesters gathering today you could find areas of agreement between their ideas and your Badger Bounce Back plan.

There are also actions you can take today, the day your shutdown was supposed to end, that would give Wisconsinites hope. For example, some hospitals across our state have the potential to resume non-essential, non-emergency surgeries due to a sustained management of Coronavirus cases. We should encourage those that are prepared and able to resume these procedures, so they do not see surges of non-Coronavirus cases due to delayed procedures. Additionally, at a time when we need to encourage Wisconsinites to get outside to stay physically and mentally healthy, we can get creative and find a way to re-open our state parks.

Strict quarantines and social distancing have helped prevent our healthcare system from being overwhelmed. Yet with Wisconsin businesses nearing the breaking point and Wisconsinites filing nearly 400,000 unemployment claims since mid-March, the extended Safer at Home order is simply not sustainable. As you rightly say, we cannot just flip a light switch and go back to business as usual. But we can provide a light at the end of the tunnel. Wisconsinites want to work, and we must trust them to work while taking care of themselves and their families.

Thank you for your consideration.

S/F,

